

Artists are the most observant of men, and yet the fat and lean John Bull are the results of their observation, or rather are all the results that they dare offer us as types. Now it is easy to see how the English ideal Bull was "evolved." He was first drawn at a time when it was the prevalent creed that all Frenchmen, except priests, were starvelings like the soldier in Hogarth's "Calais Gate." They lived on frogs and soupe maigre and there was some truth in this British conception. Frenchmen before the revolution, were as a rule, very ill-fed. La Bruyere has described the blackened, bowed, shrunken country folks in a passage that has been quoted to satiety. "Taxes and privileges ate up the food of the peasant. He has fattened in an age of freedom—though it seems a terribly radical thing to say—just as the peasants of the Riviera have put on a little flesh since the prince of Monaco ceased to be a sovereign, with power to tax and toll as far as Mentone. Thus English caricaturists were justified to some extent in contrasting sturdy Bull with the meager race of dancing-masters and barbers. When the French prisoners of the old war were in Scotland they astonished a thrifty people by shooting and eating small birds—thrushes, robins, and finches. Only starved people, it was argued, would act thus, and make a meal of the "yellow autumn's nightingale."

Thus popular observation, as far as it had a chance to observe, justified the caricature. But Mr. Leech was born with eyes in his head, and he introduced us to a dozen new types of Frenchmen. He knew how corpulent the bourgeois is apt to be, the man of huge carnivorous breakfast. He drew the bourgeois shooting, fishing, eating, dancing, and—on board the channel steamer—suffering. He showed us the stout Frenchman riding in the Bois, or confronted by an unintelligible article of furniture, or perplexed by a tub. Mr. Du Maurier, too, knows Frenchmen as well as he knows the natives of nurseries or of the Grosvenor Gallery. His big Frenchman posing on the way from his bathing machine to the sea is "quite too distinctly precious." And, when we go abroad, we see these among a hundred other types of Frenchmen, tall and fair, or short and dark and excitable, aquiline or snub-nosed, handsome or hideous. But who has seen the new John Bull of caricature, and where? Not at Wimbledon on Epsom, not at Lord's or in the House, or on the moors, is he. His faded artificial sentiment, his teeth, his simper, all are unknown, and only his Baedeker and his opera glass are familiar properties.

There are plenty of odd and offensive English types of which the continent is too familiar. Why does not Charivari draw 'Arry on his travels? There is the smart 'Arry in the extreme of the latest fashion. He wears yellow gloves and a magenta tie, he orders champagne with a loudly air, he loafs at cafes with seven other 'Arries as bad as himself. He tries the Palais Royal, but finds it dull and devotes his energies to Mabilly. In the street he shouts as if he were at home in free and happy London. There are rougher 'Arries than this, and occasionally they are personally conducted. There are Englishmen returning from the Hindoo Koosh or the Caucasus, and their garments are ragged, their faces brown, their hats are occasionally helmets of pith. They have climbed many peaks and have spoken to strange natives of unfrequented mountains. They give themselves the airs of conquerors in a lately captured city. But it is fair to say that Frenchmen often assume the same airs in London. The English Miss, too, no longer wears invariable ringlets, nor the hat of 1862. There are pre-Raphaelite young women, whom M. Claretie has seen and described. There are young women dowdy beyond the dowdiness of caricature. There are many young women who have traveled alone across Asia, and who can obviously take very good care of themselves in Paris. And there are pretty, natural English girls, whose manifest enjoyment lends brightness even to the sunniest city. But the French do not draw them. They still draw the old, old hat and ringlets, the huge boots, and the vast protruding teeth of the ideal, the typical Mees Anglaise. How can we correct ourselves if the mirror held up to us is this old one, on which the images of past fashions or of important features are eternally reflected?

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